

# **Miner Creek and Little Lake Creek Culvert Removal Project**

## **Environmental Assessment Decision Notice**

**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Region Three, Bozeman  
October 2010**

### **Proposed Action**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is proposing to provide funding for and implement a project to remove two undersized culverts, one in Miner Creek and one in Little Lake Creek, to enhance fish passage conditions in these two creeks. The existing culverts will be replaced with two simple farm bridges (12 feet long by 14 feet wide) constructed of wooden beams with pressure treated lumber for the deck. The bridges will be designed to pass light ranch equipment and are not engineered for weight.

### **Montana Environmental Policy Act**

FWP is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on September 24, 2010.

Public comments on the proposed action were taken for 22 days (through October 15, 2010). The EA was mailed to 24 individuals and groups, and legal notices were printed in the *Montana Standard* (Butte, MT) and the *Dillon Tribune*. The EA was also posted on the FWP webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices/>.

### **Summary of Public Comment**

One public comment was received during the 22-day review period.

**Comment 1.** The Montana State Historic Preservation Office stated that, “As long as there will be no disturbance or alteration to structures over fifty years of age we feel that there is a low likelihood cultural properties will be impacted. We, therefore, feel that a recommendation for a cultural resource inventory is unwarranted at this time. However, should structures need to be altered or if cultural materials be inadvertently discovered during the project we would ask that our office be contacted and the site investigated.

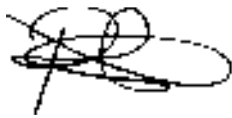
***Response:** FWP agrees to contact the Montana State Historic Preservation Office immediately if structures need to be altered or if cultural materials are discovered during the construction of this project.*

**Final Environmental Assessment**

There are no modifications necessary to the Draft Environmental Assessment based on public comment. The Draft Environmental Assessment, together with this Decision Notice, will serve as the final document for this proposal.

**Decision**

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and the need to conserve fluvial Arctic grayling, its habitat and streamflows in the upper Big Hole River watershed, it is my decision that the projects planned for Miner Creek and Little Lake Creek will have no significant impacts on the human and physical environment, that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that the projects should proceed.



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Patrick J. Flowers  
Region Three Supervisor